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SUBJECT: UNODC BRIEFING IN NY - UPCOMING EVENTS, BUDGET
ISSUES

REF: UNVIE 148

¶1. (U) Summary: Executive Director Costa of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) briefed interested delegations in New York on March 20 regarding UNODC's Global Initiative against Trafficking in Persons, including a ministerial-level meeting in November 2007 in Vienna. He described the four-year strategy approved for UNODC by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) earlier in March, spoke of the difficulties created by the small proportion of regular budget funding UNODC receives, and noted that UNODC concentrates on technical assistance in the field. Costa's presentation drew a large number of delegates, from developing countries as well as donors. End summary.

TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE

¶2. (U) Costa pointed to two events that precipitated the Global Initiative against Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Modern Slavery -- the entry into force of the Protocol to the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime (TOC), and a large grant from the United Arab Emirates. The Global Initiative has three phases: 1) raising awareness of the scope of the problem and preparing for the November meeting through events in vulnerable countries, 2) holding a ministerial-level event in Vienna in November to spur fundraising, and 3) the implementation phase, particularly focusing on helping victims of trafficking. Costa is looking at options for fundraising, including the precedent of other UN Funds (such as the HIV/AIDS fund) and the Global Appeals used for humanitarian emergencies.

¶3. (U) When Liechtenstein challenged the use of the undefined term "slavery", Costa explained that the term "modern forms of slavery" was useful as a "marketing tool", since it was more easily understood by the general public and journalists than the more arcane and bureaucratic term "TIP." Costa clarified that UNODC had no mandate to deal with slavery, but that the Palermo Protocol states that TIP can lead to "exploitation," and slavery is a form of exploitation.

¶4. (U) In response to a question from the ambassador of Belarus, Costa elucidated that UNODC foresaw a short statement as the outcome of the November meeting, perhaps to be known as the "Vienna Pledge." This statement could endorse the plan of action and might focus on sectoral or thematic issues such as "men in bondage", "women in the sex trade", etc.

¶5. (U) Turning to the theme of coordination within the UN system, prompted by another question from the Belarus ambassador, Costa reported there are two separate

coordination mechanisms on TIP within the UN. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG), involving almost all UN entities and a few outside of the UN, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Interpol, coordinates activities on the theme of TIP. The IACG is developing a website and database, and will produce periodic reports. Costa noted that measuring crime problems, including TIP, is more difficult than measuring drug cultivation. A Steering Group of 6 organizations has been formed to prepare for the November event, comprised of UNODC, ILO, UNICEF, IOM, OHCHR and OSCE, each of which had a particular area of expertise.

¶16. (U) Costa countered the U.S. query about possible duplication between the November Vienna event and the Conference of States Parties to the TOC Convention by saying the Vienna event would not monitor implementation of the Convention, but would focus on identifying points of weakness.

UNODC STRATEGY

¶17. (U) A power point presentation on the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2011 pointed out three themes where UNODC argued that it has a comparative advantage in its activities: Rule of Law, Policy and Trend Analysis, and Human Security. Two-thirds of the UNODC budget is devoted to providing technical assistance in the field. Particular attention is paid to the area where drugs, crime and terrorism intersect. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) approved the medium-term strategy in Vienna last week. The other governing body of UNODC, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) is expected to approve the strategy at its next meeting. Cuba objected to the use of the term "human security", prompting Costa to explain that

the branch of UNODC that works on human security looks into the vulnerability to different kinds of criminal behavior, such as money laundering.

BUDGET

¶18. (U) Costa mentioned that the EU has surpassed the U.S. as the largest donor to UNODC. He stressed the difficulty of carrying out some tasks, such as compiling an accessible database, given the reliance of UNODC on voluntary earmarked contributions. The largest single country donors are Sweden (9 percent), U.S. (8 percent), UK (7 percent), Italy (4 percent) and Norway (2 percent). Emerging and new donors, such as Brazil, are playing a bigger role in UNODC's funding. Although overall funding for UNODC has risen, the proportion coming from the regular budget (less than 10 percent) has declined.

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